


Burushaski

Burushaski (/bʊrʊˈʃæski/^[6] Burushaski: بروشسکی, romanized: *burūšaskī*) is a language isolate spoken by Burusho people who reside almost entirely in northern Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan,^{[7][8]} with a few hundred speakers in northern Jammu and Kashmir, India.^{[7][1]} In Pakistan, Burushaski is spoken by people in Hunza-Nagar District, northern Gilgit District, and in the Yasin and Ishkoman valleys of northern Ghizer District. Their native region is located in northern Gilgit–Baltistan and borders with Pamir corridor to the north. In India, Burushaski is spoken in Botraj Mohalla of the Hari Parbat region in Srinagar.^{[2][9]} Other names for the language are *Biltum*, *Khajuna*, *Kunjut*, *Brushaski*, *Burucaki*, *Burucaski*, *Burushaki*, *Burushki*,^[10] *Brugaski*, *Brushas*, *Werchikwar* and *Miśa:ski*.

Contents
Classification
Varieties
Writing system
Phonology
Grammar
Nouns
Noun classes
Pluralisation
Declension
Pronouns and pronominal prefixes
Numerals
Verbs
Overview
The 11 positions of the finite verb
Formation of tenses and moods
Indication of the subject and object
The d- prefix
See also
References
Bibliography
Further reading
External links

Burushaski	
بروشسکی	
بروشسکی <div>The word <i>Burūšaskī</i> written in the Arabic script</div>	
Native to	Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan <div>Jammu and Kashmir, India^[1]</div>
Region	Hunza-Nagar, northern Ghizer, northern Gilgit, Hari Parbat ^[2]
Ethnicity	Burusho people
<div>Native speakers</div>	112,000 ^[3] (2016) ^[4]
<div>Language family</div>	<div>Language isolate</div>
Dialects	<div>Burushaski proper (Hunza-Nagar)</div> <div>Wershikwar (Yasin)</div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div>
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	bsk
Glottolog	buru1296 (http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/buru1296) ^[5]
 <div></div>	

Classification

Attempts have been made to establish links between Burushaski and several different language families, although none has been accepted by a majority of linguists.

Following Berger (1956), the *American Heritage* dictionaries suggested that the word **abel* 'apple', the only name for a fruit (tree) reconstructed for Proto-Indo-European, may have been borrowed from a language ancestral to Burushaski. ("Apple" and "apple tree" are *báalt* in modern Burushaski.)

Other hypotheses posit a genealogical relationship between Burushaski and the North Caucasian languages, Kartvelian languages,^[11] Yeniseian languages and/or Indo-European languages, usually in proposed macrofamilies.

- The proposed but contended "Dené–Caucasian" macrofamily includes Burushaski as a primary branch alongside North Caucasian and Yeniseian.^{[12][13]}
- Another proposed macrofamily, known as "Karasuk",^[14] links Burushaski with Yeniseian.
- A relationship to the proposed "Indo-Hittite clade" of the Indo-European family has been suggested by Eric P. Hamp and Ilija Čašule.^{[15][16][17][18]} The various proposals linking Burushaski to Indo-European make divergent—or in the case of Čašule even contradictory—claims about the nature of the relationship, and are rejected by mainstream scholarship.^[19]
- A possible relation to the North Caucasian languages.^[20]

The linguist Sadaf Munshi stated that Burushaski may have developed alongside the Dravidian languages before the Indo-Aryan migration to South Asia, mentioning the fact that both possess retroflex sounds.^[21]

(Burushaski was not included in a 2008 study from Edward Vajda,^[22] to revive Merritt Ruhlen's proposed "Dené–Yeniseian macrofamily",^[23] which linked Yeniseian and Na-Dene. Vajda rejects any relation between Yeniseian and Burushaski.)

Varieties

Burushaski is spoken by about 90,000 speakers in Pakistan, and also by a few hundred in India.^[7] In Pakistan, it is spoken in main valleys: Yasin, Hunza, and Nagar. The varieties of Hunza and Nagar diverge slightly, but are clearly dialects of a single language. The Yasin variety, also known by the Khowar exonym *Werchikwar*, is much more divergent. Intelligibility between Yasin and Hunza-Nagar is difficult, and Yasin is sometimes considered a distinct language and the pure Burushaski is spoken in Yasin valley.^[24] Yasin is the least affected by contact with neighboring languages, though speakers are bilingual in Khowar. Yasin is spoken by a quarter of Burushaski speakers.^[25]

In India, Jammu & Kashmir Burushaski (JKB) "has developed divergent linguistic features which make it systematically different from the varieties spoken in Pakistan."^[26] The dialect of Burushaski spoken in India has been influenced by Kashmiri, as well as Hindi and Urdu.^[27] Unique to JKB is the features of vowel syncopation.^[2] Jammu & Kashmir Burushaski shares more similarities with the dialect spoken in Nagar than with that spoken in Hunza.^[26]

Writing system

Burushaski is a predominantly spoken rather than written language. Occasionally the Urdu alphabet is used,^[28] and there are some specific characters in unicode,^[29] but no fixed orthography exists. Adu Wazir Shafi wrote a book *Burushaski Razon* using a Latin script.

Tibetan sources record a *Bru-śa* language of the Gilgit valley, which appears to have been Burushaski, whose script was one of five scripts used to write the extinct Zhang-Zhung language. Although Burushaski may once have been a significant literary language, no *Bru-śa* manuscripts are known to have survived.^[30]

Linguists working on Burushaski use various makeshift transcriptions based on the Latin alphabet, most commonly that by Berger (see below), in their publications.

Burushaski Letter	Romanization	<u>IPA</u>
ا	aa	/aː/
اٲ	a	/a/
اٳ	áa	/ˈaː/
ب	b	/b/
پ	p	/p/
ت	t	/t/
ٲ	ṭ	/ṭ/
ش	s	/s/
ج	j	/dʒ/ʒ/
چ	ć	/tʃ/
چٲ	ch	/tʃʰ/

چ	ç	/tʃ/
ح	h	/h/
خ	qh	/q ^h ~qχ~χ/
د	d	/d/
ڌ	c	/ts/
ڍ	ɖ	/dʒ/
ڙ	z	/z/
ر	r	/r/
ڙ	ɖ	/dʒ/
ز	z	/z/
ڙ	j	/dz~zʃ/
	s	/s/

س		
ش	ś	/ʃ/
سّ	ş	/ʃ/
ص	s	/s/
ض	çh	/tʃʰ/
ض	z	/z/
ط	t	/t/
ظ	z	/z/
ع	ʿ	/ʔ/
غ	ğ	/ɣ/
ف	ph	/pʰ~pf~f/
	q	/q/

ق		
ک	k	/k/
گ	g	/g/
ڱ	ŋ	/ŋ/
ل	l	/l/
م	m	/m/
ن	n	/n/
ڻ	ɳ	/ɳ/
و	w/oo	/w/o:/
و	o	/o/
و	oo	/ 'o:/
	h	/h/

و		
ھ	h	/h/
ع	'	/ʔ/
ی	y	/j/
یی	ii	/ˈiː/
ی	ɣ	/ɣ/
ا	ee	/eː/
ا	e	/e/
ا	ée	/ˈeː/

Phonology

Burushaski primarily has five vowels, /i e a o u/. Various contractions result in long vowels; stressed vowels (marked with acute accents in Berger's transcription) tend to be longer and less "open" than unstressed ones ([i e a o u] as opposed to [ɪ ɛ ʌ ɔ ʊ]). Long vowels also occur in loans and in a few onomatopoeic words (Grune 1998). All vowels have nasal counterparts in Hunza (in some expressive words) and in Nager (also in proper names and a few other words).

Berger (1998) finds the following consonants to be phonemic, shown below in his transcription and in the IPA:

		<u>Bilabial</u>	<u>Dental/ Alveolar</u>	<u>Alveolo- palatal</u>	<u>Retroflex</u>	<u>Velar</u>	<u>Uvular</u>	<u>Glottal</u>
<u>Nasal</u>		<i>m</i> /m/	<i>n</i> /n/			<i>ŋ</i> /ŋ/		
<u>Plosive</u>	<u>aspirated</u>	<i>ph</i> /p ^h / [1]	<i>th</i> /t ^h /		<i>ṭh</i> /ṭ ^h /	<i>kh</i> /k ^h /	<i>qh</i> /q ^h / [2]	
	<u>voiceless</u>	<i>p</i> /p/	<i>t</i> /t/		<i>ṭ</i> /ṭ/	<i>k</i> /k/	<i>q</i> /q/	
	<u>voiced</u>	<i>b</i> /b/	<i>d</i> /d/		<i>ḍ</i> /ḍ/	<i>g</i> /g/		
<u>Affricate</u>	<u>aspirated</u> [3]		<i>ch</i> /tʃ ^h /	<i>čh</i> /tʃ ^h /	<i>ṣh</i> /tʃ ^h /			
	<u>voiceless</u>		<i>c</i> /tʃ/	<i>č</i> /tʃ/	<i>ṣ</i> /tʃ/			
	<u>voiced</u>			<i>j</i> /dʒ/ [4]	<i>ḷ</i> /dʒ/ [5]			
<u>Fricative</u>	<u>voiceless</u>		<i>s</i> /s/	<i>ś</i> /ɕ/	<i>ṣ</i> /ʃ/			<i>h</i> /h/
	<u>voiced</u>		<i>z</i> /z/				<i>ġ</i> /ʁ/	
<u>Trill</u>			<i>r</i> /r/					
<u>Approximant</u>			<i>l</i> /l/	<i>y</i> [j] [6]	<i>ɭ</i> /ɭ/ [7]	<i>w</i> [w] [6]		

Notes:

1. Pronunciation varies: [p^h] ~ [pʰ] ~ [f].
2. Pronunciation varies: [q^h] ~ [q̠ʰ] ~ [χ].
3. The Yasin dialect lacks aspirated affricates and uses the plain ones instead.
4. Sometimes pronounced [ʒ].
5. Sometimes pronounced [z].
6. Berger (1998) regards [w] and [j] as allophones of /u/ and /i/ that occur in front of stressed vowels.
7. This phoneme has various pronunciations, all of which are rare sounds cross-linguistically. Descriptions include: "a voiced retroflex sibilant with simultaneous dorso-palatal narrowing" (apparently [ʒ^j]) (Berger 1998); "a fricative *r*, pronounced with the tongue in the retroflex ('cerebral') position" (apparently [ɭ]/[ʒ], a sound which also occurs in **Standard Chinese**, written *r* in **Pinyin**) (Morgenstierne 1945); and "a curious sound whose phonetic realizations vary from a retroflex, spirantized glide to a retroflex velarized spirant" (Anderson forthcoming). In any case, it does not occur in the Yasin dialect, and in Hunza and Nager it does not occur at the beginning of words.

Grammar

Burushaski is a double-marking language and word order is generally subject–object–verb.

Nouns in Burushaski are divided into four genders: human masculine, human feminine, countable objects, and uncountable ones (similar to mass nouns). The assignment of a noun to a particular gender is largely predictable. Some words can belong both to the countable and to the uncountable class, producing differences in meaning. For example, when countable, *báalt* means 'apple' but when uncountable, it means 'apple tree' (Grune 1998).

Noun morphology consists of the noun stem, a possessive prefix (mandatory for some nouns, and thus an example of inherent possession), and number and case suffixes. Distinctions in number are singular, plural, indefinite, and grouped. Cases include absolutive, ergative/oblique, genitive, and several locatives; the latter indicate both location and direction and may be compounded.

Burushaski verbs have three basic stems: past tense, present tense, and consecutive. The past stem is the citation form and is also used for imperatives and nominalization; the consecutive stem is similar to a past participle and is used for coordination. Agreement on the verb has both nominative and ergative features: transitive verbs and unaccusatives mark both the subject and the object of a clause, while unergative verbs mark only subject agreement on the verb. Altogether, a verb can take up to four prefixes and six suffixes.

Nouns

Noun classes

In Burushaski, there are four noun classes, similar to declensional classes in Indo-European languages, but unlike Indo-European, the nominal classes in Burushaski are associated with four grammatical "genders":

- **m** = male human beings, gods and spirits
- **f** = female human beings and spirits
- **x** = animals, countable nouns
- **y** = abstract concepts, fluids, uncountable nouns

Below, the abbreviation "**h**" will stand for the combination of the m- and f-classes, while "**hx**" will stand for the combination of the m-, f- and x-classes. Nouns in the x-class typically refer to countable, non-human beings or things, for example animals, fruit, stones, eggs, or coins; conversely, nouns in the y-class are as a rule uncountable abstractions or mass nouns, such as rice, fire, water, snow, wool, etc.

However, these rules are not universal – countable objects in the y-class are sometimes encountered, e.g. *ha*, 'house'. Related words can subtly change their meanings when used in different classes – for example, *bayú*, when a member of the x-class, means salt in clumps, but when in the y-class, it means powdered salt. Fruit trees are understood collectively and placed in the y-class, but their individual fruits belong to the x-class. Objects made of particular materials can belong to either the x- or the y- class: stone and wood are in the x-class, but metal and leather in the y-class. The article, adjectives, numerals and other attributes must be in agreement with the noun class of their subject.

Pluralisation

There are two numbers in Burushaski: singular and plural. The singular is unmarked, while the plural is expressed by means of suffix, which vary depending on the class of the noun:

- **h-class**: possible suffixes -ting, -aro, -daro, -taro, -tsaro
- **h- and x-class**: possible suffixes -o, -išo, -ko, -iko, -juko; -ono, -u; -i, -ai; -ts, -uts, -muts, -umuts; -nts, -ants, -ints, -iants, -ingants, -ents, -onts
- **y-class**: possible suffixes -ng, -ang, -ing, -iang; -eng, -ong, -ongo; -ming, -čing, -ičing, -mičing, -ičang (Nagar dialect)

Some nouns admit two or three different prefixes, while others have no distinctive suffix, and occur only in the plural, e.g. *bras* 'rice', *gur* 'wheat', *bishké*, 'fur', (cf. plurale tantum). On the other hand, there are also nouns which have identical forms in the singular and plural, e.g. *hağúr* 'horses'. Adjectives have a unique plural suffix, whose form depends on the class of the noun they modify, e.g. *burúm* 'white' gives the x-class plural *burum-išo* and the y-class plural *burúm-ing*.

Examples of pluralisation in Burushaski:

- *wazíir* (m), pl. *wazíirishu* 'vizier, minister'
- *hir* (m), pl. *huri* 'man' (stress shifts)
- *gus* (f), pl. *gushínga* 'woman' (stress shifts)
- *dasín* (f), pl. *daseyoo* 'girl', 'unmarried woman'
- *huk* (x), pl. *huká* 'dog'
- *thely* (x), pl. *tilí* 'walnut'
- *thely* (y), pl. *theleng* 'walnut tree'

Declension

Burushaski is an ergative language. It has five primary cases.

Case	Suffix	Function
<u>Absolutive</u>	unmarked	The subject of intransitive verbs and the object of transitive ones.
<u>Ergative</u>	-e	The subject of transitive verbs.
<u>Oblique</u>	-e; - <i>mo</i> (f)	<u>Genitive</u> ; the basis of secondary case endings
<u>Dative</u>	- <i>ar</i> , - <i>r</i>	Dative, <u>allative</u> .
<u>Ablative</u>	- <i>um</i> , - <i>m</i> , - <i>mo</i>	Indicates separation (e.g. 'from where?')

The case suffixes are appended to the plural suffix, e.g. *Huséiniukutse*, 'the people of Hussein' (ergative plural). The genitive ending is irregular, /*mo*/, for singular f-class nouns, but /-e/ in all others (identical to the ergative ending). The dative ending, /-*ar*/, /-*r*/ is attached to the genitive ending for singular f-class nouns, but to the stem for all others. Examples:

- *hir-e* 'the man's', *gus-mo* 'the woman's' (gen.)
- *hir-ar* 'to the man', *gus-mu-r* 'to the woman' (dat.)

The genitive is placed before the thing possessed: *Hunzue tham*, 'the Emir of Hunza.'

The endings of the secondary cases are formed from a secondary case suffix (or infix) and one of the primary endings /-e/, /-*ar*/ or /-*um*/. These endings are directional, /-e/ being locative (answering 'where?'), /-*ar*/ being terminative (answering 'where to?'), and /-*um*/ being ablative (answering 'where from?'). The infixes, and their basic meanings, are as follows:

1. -*ts*- 'at'
2. -*ul*- 'in'
3. -*a ɬ*- 'on; with'
4. -*al*- 'near' (only in the Hunza dialect)

From these, the following secondary or compound cases are formed:

Infix	Locative	Terminative	Ablative
- <i>ts</i> -	- <i>ts-e</i> 'at'	- <i>ts-ar</i> 'to'	- <i>ts-um</i> 'from'
- <i>ul</i> -	- <i>ul-e</i> 'in'	- <i>ul-ar</i> 'into'	- <i>ul-um</i> 'out of'
- <i>a ɬ</i> -	- <i>a ɬ-e</i> 'on', 'with'	- <i>a ɬ-ar</i> 'up to'	- <i>a ɬ-um</i> 'down from'
- <i>al</i> -	- <i>al-e</i> 'near'	- <i>al-ar</i> 'to'	- <i>al-um</i> 'from'

The regular endings /-ul-e/ and /-ul-ar/ are archaic and are now replaced by /-ul-o/ and /-ar-ulo/ respectively.

Pronouns and pronominal prefixes

Nouns indicating parts of the body and kinship terms are accompanied by an obligatory pronominal prefix. Thus, one cannot simply say 'mother' or 'arm' in Burushaski, but only 'my arm', 'your mother', 'his father', etc. For example, the root *mi* 'mother', is never found in isolation, instead one finds:

- *i-mi* 'his mother', *mu-mi* 'her mother', "gu-mi" 'your mother'(3f sg.), *u-mi* 'their mother' (3h pl.), *u-mi-tsaro* 'their mothers'(3h pl.).

The pronominal, or personal, prefixes agree with the person, number and – in the third person, the class of their noun. A summary of the basic forms is given in the following table:

Person/ Noun class	Singular	Plural
1st person	<i>a-</i>	<i>mi-, me-</i>
2nd person	<i>gu-, go-</i>	<i>ma-</i>
3rd person m	<i>i-, e-</i>	<i>u-, o-</i>
3rd person f	<i>mu-</i>	<i>u-, o-</i>
3rd person x	<i>i-, y-</i>	<i>u-, o-</i>
3rd person y	<i>i-, e-</i>	

Personal pronouns in Burushaski distinguish proximal and distal forms, e.g. *khin* 'he, this one here', but *in*, 'he, that one there'. In the oblique, there are additional abbreviated forms.

Numerals

The Burushaski number system is vigesimal, i.e. based on the number 20. For example, 20 *altar*, 40 *alto-altar* (2 times 20), 60 *iski-altar* (3 times 20) etc. The base numerals are:

- 1 *han* (or *hen*, *hak*)
- 2 *altó* (or *altán*)
- 3 *isko* (or *iskey*)
- 4 *wálto*
- 5 *čindó*
- 6 *mishíndo*
- 7 *thaló*
- 8 *altámbo*
- 9 *hunchó*
- 10 *tóorumo* (also *toorimi* and *turma*)
- 100 *tha*

Examples of compound numerals:

11 *turma-han*, 12 *turma-alto*, 13 *turma-isko*, ... , 19 *turma-hunti*; 20 *altar*, 30 *altar-toorumo*, 40 *alto-altar*, 50 *alto-altar-toorumo*, 60 *iski-altar* and so on; 21 *altar-hak*, 22 *altar-alto*, 23 *altar-isko* and so on.

Verbs

Overview

The verbal morphology of Burushaski is extremely complicated and rich in forms. Many sound changes can take place, including assimilation, deletion and accent shift, which are unique for almost every verb. Here, we can only specify certain basic principles.

The Burushaski finite verb falls into the following categories:

Category	Possible forms
<u>Tense/Aspect</u>	Present, <u>Future</u> , Imperfect, <u>Perfect</u> , <u>Pluperfect</u>
<u>Mood</u>	<u>Conditional</u> , three <u>Optatives</u> , Imperative, <u>Conative</u>
<u>Number</u>	Singular, <u>Plural</u>
<u>Person</u>	1st, 2nd and 3rd Person (2nd person only in the imperative).
<u>Noun class</u>	the four noun classes m, f, x and y (only in the 3rd person)

For many transitive verbs, in addition to the subject, the (direct) object is also indicated, also by pronominal prefixes which vary according to person, number and class. All verbs have negative forms, and many intransitive verbs also have derived transitive forms. The infinitive forms – which in Burushaski are the absolutes of the past and present, the perfect participle, and two infinitives – admit all the finite variations except tense and mood. Infinitive forms are made together with auxiliary verbs and periphrastic forms.

The 11 positions of the finite verb

All verb forms can be constructed according to a complex but regular position system. Berger describes a total of 11 possible positions, or slots, although not all of these will be filled in any given verb form. Many positions also have several alternative contents (indicated by A/B/C below). The verb stem is in position 5, preceded by four possible prefixes and followed by seven possible suffixes. The following table gives an overview of the positions and their functions

■ The positions of Burushaski finite verbs

Position	Affixes and their meanings
1	Negative prefix a-
2a/b	d-prefix (creates intransitive verbs) / n-prefix (absolutive prefix)
3	Pronominal prefixes: subject of intransitive, object of transitive verbs
4	s-prefix (creates secondary transitive verbs)
5	Verb Stem
6	Plural suffix -ya- on the verb stem
7	Present stem mark -č- (or š, ts..) forming the present, future and imperfect
8a/b	Pronominal suffix of the 1.sg. -a- (subject) / linking vowel (no semantic meaning)
9a	m-suffix: forms the m-participle and m-optative from the simple /
9b	m-suffix: forms the future and conditional from the present stem /
9c	n-suffix: marks the absolutive (see position 2) /
9d	š-suffix: forms the š-optative and the -iš-Infinitive /
9e	Infinitive ending -as, -áas / optative suffix -áa (added directly to the stem)
10a	Pronominal suffixes of the 2nd and 3rd Person and 1. pl. (subject) /
10b	Imperative forms (added directly to the stem) /
10c	Forms of the auxiliary verb <i>ba-</i> for forming the present, imperfect, perfect and pluperfect
11	Nominal endings and particles

Formation of tenses and moods

The formation of the tenses and moods involves the use of several positions, or slots, in complicated ways. The preterite, perfect, pluperfect and conative are formed from the 'simple stem,' whereas the present, imperfect, future and conditional are formed from the 'present stem,' which is itself formed from the simple stem by placing -č- in position 7. The optative and imperative are derived directly from the stem. Altogether, the schema is as follows:

The formation of the tenses and moods of the verb *her* 'to cry', without prefixes:

■ Simple stem tenses

Grammatical category	Construction	Form and meaning
Conative	stem + personal suffix	<i>her-i</i> 'he starts to cry'
Preterite	stem [+ linking vowel] + m-suffix + personal suffix	<i>her-i-m-i</i> 'he cried'
Perfect	stem [+ linking vowel] + present auxiliary	<i>her-a-i</i> 'he has cried'
Pluperfect	stem [+ linking vowel] + perfect auxiliary	<i>her-a-m</i> 'he had cried'

■ Present stem tenses

Grammatical category	Construction	Form and meaning
Future	stem + present marker [+ linking vowel + m-suffix] + personal ending	<i>her-č-i</i> 'he will cry'
Present	stem + present marker + linking vowel + present auxiliary	<i>her-č-a-i</i> 'he is crying'
Imperfect	stem + present marker + linking vowel + perfect auxiliary	<i>her-č-a-m</i> 'he was crying, used to cry'
Conditional	stem + present marker + linking vowel + m-Suffix (except 1. pl.) + <i>če</i>	<i>her-č-u-m-če</i> '... he would cry',
	stem + present marker + linking vowel + 1. pl. ending + <i>če</i>	<i>her-č-an-če</i> 'we would cry'

■ Optatives and Imperative

Grammatical category	Construction	Form and meaning
áa-optative	stem + <i>áa</i> (in all persons)	<i>her-áa</i> "... should.. cry"
<i>m</i> -optative	stem [+ linking vowel] + m-suffix	<i>her-u-m</i> "... should.. cry"
š-optative	stem + (<i>i</i>)š + personal suffix	<i>her-š-an</i> "he should cry"
Imperative singular	stem [+ <i>é</i> for ending-accented verbs]	<i>her</i> "cry!"
Imperative plural	stem + <i>in</i>	<i>her-in</i> "cry!"

Indication of the subject and object

The subject and object of the verb are indicated by the use of personal prefixes and suffixes in positions 3, 8 and 10 as follows:

Affix	Position	Function
Prefixes	3	direct object of transitive verbs, subject of intransitive ones
Suffixes	8/10	subject of transitive and intransitive verbs

The personal prefixes are identical to the pronominal prefixes of nouns (mandatory with body parts and kinship terms, as above). A simplified overview of the forms of the affixes is given in the following table:

■ Personal prefix (Position 3)

Person/ noun class	Singular	Plural
1st Person	<i>a-</i>	<i>mi-</i>
2nd Person	<i>gu-</i>	<i>ma-</i>
3rd Person m	<i>i-</i>	<i>u-</i>
3rd Person f	<i>mu-</i>	<i>u-</i>
3rd Person x	<i>i-</i>	<i>u-</i>
3rd Person y	<i>i-</i>	

■ Personal suffixes (Positions 8 and 10)

Person/ noun class	Singular	Plural
1st/2nd Person	-a	-an
3rd Person m	-i	-an
3rd Person f	-o	-an
3rd Person x	-i	-ie
3rd Person y	-i	

For example, the construction of the preterite of the transitive verb *phus* 'to tie', with prefixes and suffixes separated by hyphens, is as follows :

- *i-phus-i-m-i* "he ties him" (filled positions: 3-5-8-9-10)
- *mu-phus-i-m-i* "he ties her (f)"
- *u-phus-i-m-i* "he ties them (pl. hx)"
- *mi-phus-i-m-i* "he ties us"
- *i-phus-i-m-an* "we/you/they tie him"
- *mi-phus-i-m-an* "you/they tie us"
- *i-phus-i-m-a* "I tie it"
- *gu-phus-i-m-a* "I tie you"

The personal affixes are also used when the noun occupies the role of the subject or the object, e.g. *hir i-ír-i-mi* 'the man died'. With intransitive verbs, the subject function is indicated by both a prefix and a suffix, as in:

- *gu-ír-č-u-m-a* "you will die" (future)
- *i-ghurts-i-m-i* "he sank" (preterite)

Personal prefixes do not occur in all verbs and all tenses. Some verbs do not admit personal prefixes, others still do so only under certain circumstances. Personal prefixes used with intransitive verbs often express a volitional function, with prefixed forms indicating an action contrary to the intention of the subject. For example:

- *hurúṭ-i-m-i* "he sat down" (volitional action without prefix)
- *i-ír-i-m-i* "he died" (involuntary action with prefix)
- *ghurts-i-mi* "he went willingly underwater", "he dove" (without prefix)
- *i-ghurts-i-m-i* "he went unwillingly underwater", "he sank" (with prefix)

The d- prefix

A number of verbs – mostly according to their root form – are found with the d-prefix in position 2, which occurs before a consonant according to vowel harmony. The precise semantic function of the d-prefix is unclear. With primary transitive verbs the d-prefix, always without personal prefixes, forms regular intransitives. Examples:

- *i-phalt-i-mi* 'he breaks it open' (transitive)
- *du-phalt-as* 'to break open, to explode' (intransitive)

A master's thesis research work of a native speaker of Burushaski on Middle Voice Construction in the Hunza Dialect claims that the [dd-] verbal prefix is an overt morphological middle marker for MV constructions, while the [n-] verbal prefix is a morphological marker for passive voice.^[31] The data primarily come from the Hunza dialect of Burushaski, but analogous phenomena can be observed in other dialects. This research is based on a corpus of 120 dd-prefix verbs. This research has showed that position {-2} on the verb template is occupied by voice-marker in Burushaski. The author argues that the middle marker is a semantic category of its own and that it is clearly distinguished from the reflexive marker in this language. The middle marker (MM) means the grammatical device used to "indicate that the two semantic roles of Initiator and Endpoint refer to a single holistic entity" (Kemmer 1993: 47). In the view of that definition, I look at a middle marked verb in Burushaski and illustration follows the example.^[31]

- *hiles dd-i-il-imi* 'the boy drenched'

See also

- [Burushaski comparative vocabulary list](#) (Wiktionary)
- [Partawi Shah](#)
- [Languages of Pakistan](#)

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External links

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